MINUTES

OF THE

BROAD RIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,

AT THE

FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY MEETING,

CONVENED AT

BUCK CREEK CHURCH, SPARTANBURG DISTRICT, S, C.

Friday, October 18th, 1850, and days following.

The Introductory Sermon was delivered by Elder J. S. Ezell, from Hebrews, xii chapter and 2nd verse.

After a short recess, the Delegates met in the house, and Prayer was offered by Elder D. Scruggs.

1. The Churches were called, their Correspondence received and read, and the names of their Delegates enrolled.

2. Elected Rev. Dr. Curtis, Moderator, and M. C. Barnett, Clerk.

3. Opened the door for reception of Churches into our Union; whereupon, Broad River, a newly constituted Church, made application through its Delegates, and was received as a member of this body.

4. Appointed brethren D. Scruggs, W. Hill, J. R. Logan, J. S. Ezell, with the Moderator and Clerk, a committee of arrangement, to whom all the papers pertaining to the Association were referred.

Brother Morgan prayed, and the Association adjourned until Saturday morning 10 o'clock.

Saturday, 10 o'clock, A. M.

The Association met according to adjournment. Prayer by brother Mullinax.

5. The committee on the business of the Association reported. The report was received and adopted.

6. Appointed brethren T. J. McKisic, H. G. Gafney, and J. Byars, in connection with the eldership of this Church, a committee to arrange preaching during the session of this body.

7. Read Rules of decorum.

8. Invited ministering brethren present, not Delegates, to a seat with us. Elders R. P. Logan, Professor J. C. Furman, and W. D. Beverly, being present, accepted, and were requested to aid us in counsel.

9. Called for Correspondence from sister Associations; and received from the Bethel, a Letter but no Messenger; from the Catawba, a Letter, by their Messenger, Elder R. Moody; from the Green River, a Letter and Minutes, by their Messengers, Elders A. Padgett, H. Culbreth, and B. Page; from the Reedy River, a Letter but no Messenger; from the Tyger River, and Charleston, no Correspondence.

10. Appointed brethren H. Borders, A. Bonner, E. Barnett, and J. Bayly, a committee to arrange Union Meetings.

11. Appointed a Financial Committee, viz. brethren B. Bonner, A. J. Cansler, and Wm. Roberts.

12. Appointed Elders D. Scruggs, T. K. Pursley, T. Dickson, and J. S. Ezell, a committee to write Letters of Correspondence to sister Associations.

13. Considered a query from Antioch Church, in reference to the position of the body, in time of public prayer, and replied that both standing and kneeling are authorized in Scripture; but, for the sake of uniformity, we recommend kneeling, when convenient.

14. The Circular Letter, prepared by Thos. Curtis, D. D., was read, adopted, and ordered to be printed, in connexion with the Minutes of this session.

15. The report of the Committee on Union Meetings, was as follows: First, at Salem, to commence on Friday before the third Sabbath in May, 1851, Elders T. Curtis, D. Scruggs, T. Dickson, and M. C. Barnett, to attend it. Second, at Zion, to commence on Friday before the first Sabbath in June, Elders J. S. Ezell, D. Scruggs, and B. E. Rollins, to attend it. Third, at Mt. Ararat, on Friday before the fourth Sabbath in April, Elders Wm. Curtis, D. Scruggs. T. Dickson, and S. Morgan, to attend it. Fourth, at Gilead, to commence on Friday before the second Sabbath in August, Elders M. Mullinax, J. G. Kendrick, D. Scruggs, T. Dickson, B. E. Rollins, G. Rollins, R. P. Logan, and Wm. Lankford, to attend it. The report was received, and the committee discharged.

16. The Committee on Finance reported as follow:

Received contributions from Churches this year, for printing Minutes, - - - - - - - - -	$41 53
From J. K. Logan, former Clerk, balance of funds last year, - - - - - - - - - - -	13 89
Making an aggregate of - - -	$55 42

The report was received and the committee discharged.

17. Elected Elder T. Dickson, to preach the Sermon introductory to the next Association, and Elder D. Scruggs, his alternate.

18. Elected M. C. Barnett to write the next Circular Letter; the subject to be *The nature of a call to the Ministry, and the duty of Churches to their gifted brethren.*

19. *Resolved*, That the Moderator and Clerk superintend the printing and distribution of two thousand copies of these Minutes. The Clerk to receive $10 00.

20. *Resolved*, That this Association convene next year at the usual time, with the Sandy Run Church, Cleaveland county, N. C., 8 miles north of Champion's ferry, on Broad river, and 8 miles west of Shelby.

21. Whereas the Governors of N. and S. Carolina, have requested the citizens of these States, respectively, to observe days of humiliation and prayer, in view of the threatening aspect of our public affairs. *Resolved*, That the Delegates here present will use their influence and endeavors to secure compliance with the request thus made, among the Churches composing this Association.

Brother Pursley prayed, and the Association adjourned until Monday morning, 9 o'clock,

SUNDAY.

The forenoon services were conducted by Professor Furman, followed by brother Whilden, our Missionary to China; after which a collection was taken up, and $41 00 were found to be contributed by the congregation, for the China Mission.

Afternoon.—A Sermon was preached by Rev. Dr. Curtis, and the services of the day were concluded by Elder D. Scruggs. We have seldom witnessed a day of more general interest.

MONDAY, 9 o'clock, A. M.

Brother Dickson prayed, and the Association proceeded to business.

22. The Committee appointed to prepare Corresponding Letters, presented their Letters, all of which were adopted.

23. Appointed Elders T. K. Pursley, T. J. Campbell, S. Morgan, J. G. Kindrick, and brother J. T. McKisic, Corresponding Messengers to the Bethel Association; to the Catawba, Elders T. K. Pursley, W. Hill, T. Dickson, J. M. McCraw. and brother A. J. Cansler; to the Reedy River, Elders D. Scruggs, M. C. Barnett, T. J. Campbell, and W. Lankford; to the Tyger River, Elders S. Morgan, D. Scruggs, M. C. Barnett, T. J. Campbell, and J. C. White; to the Green River, Elders J. S. Ezell, L. McSwain, J. Suttle, B. E. Rollins, and T. Dickson; to the Charleston (by consent) Professor J. C. Furman.

24. *Resolved*, That the Delegates of this Association recommend their Churches to consider the state of the destitute regions of the country around us, and send their free will offerings to the next Associations to support such Domestic Missions as may meet that destitution.

25. *Resolved*, That this body consider it expedient at the present time, to send some Preacher to assist brother Hill, in those destitute sections of our country where he labours; brother M. C. Barnett was nominated, who accepted the appointment. $30 were immediately collected for this object.

26. *Resolved*, That the thanks of this Association are due, and are hereby presented, to the brethren and friends of this vicinity, for the very kind and hospitable manner in which they have entertained this body.

The Moderator prayed, and the Association adjourned unto the time and place above mentioned.

THOMAS CURTIS, *Moderator.*

M. C. BARNETT, *Clerk.*

CHRISTIAN COMMUNION.

Upon this subject, as upon the kindred one of Christian Baptism, to which our attention was last year directed, the same introductory remark is in point. There have appeared of late so many valuable tracts and treatises upon it, that any one acquainted with half of them will be unwilling to add to their number. Both are subjects upon which it is difficult to write briefly to any good purpose, and impossible to write anything new. The present writer will do all he can, however, to meet the wishes of his brethren, in comprising what may be useful in an annual circular.

Christian Communion may be regarded in three principal points of view: I. Our communion with Christ. II. Our communion with our fellow christians at large. III. Ecclesiastical or Church Communion.

I. Our communion with Christ is clearly the foundation upon which

every other view of this subject must be built. Where this is not real, and in scriptural exercise (a personal fellowship, on our part, "with the Father and with his son Jesus Christ,") what communion or scriptural fellowship can *we* offer or exercise toward any fellow man? If we endeavor to exhibit it in word or deed, we shall be "like a man," truly, "who, without a foundation, built his house upon the earth." Or, if we, being Christians, expect the exercise of Christian Communion toward us, by those who are not themselves Christians, we shall be disappointed; and may be well described, in the poet's words, as

> ——— dropping buckets into empty wells,
> And growing old with drawing nothing up.

Christians are brethren because the Elder Brother, the Son of God, has made them, individually, "free" in a double sense; given them a freedom of deliverance from the bondage of sin, and a freedom of privilege, or peculiar rights in His Father's house, where all who thus truly enter, abide forever; and because (as in the case of all brotherhood) they are individually of a common parentage; "all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." They are admonished to love one another with a purity and fervor peculiar to this tie: "*being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.*"— Another motive to this intense affection, mentioned in the same connection, is the work of the Holy Spirit in their hearts and lives. "*Seeing ye have purified your hearts in obeying the truth through the Spirit.*" All the Holy Trinity, therefore, concur in the work of laying deep the foundations of Christian Communion in the individual Christian's heart. They are an essential part of that "mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ," which this man cherishes there, under his baptism acknowledged; and "in which are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." The close connection between the Communion of Saints, and this individual communion with Heaven, is in modern times often overlooked; but they are related as the effect to its cause, as the stream to the fountain, as the beams of the morning to the rising sun; the one *cannot be* without the other.— We are to "love the brotherhood," or fraternity of Christians (which is something more than loving particular, or any number of brethren) because of its origin in the fatherhood or paternity of God: and both ties are the more binding because our understandings, consciences, affections, and will, are all consulted and engaged, from the first, in the function of both. The children of God, by faith, we are brethren, as no natural brethren are, by *choice*, and hence, surely, the more distinctly and more firmly bound. We do not find these great truths disputed anywhere among sound Christians; they are only neglected and too little felt. But they establish, in every glance at them, the importance of an individual conversion to God, or of making our own "calling and election sure;" and the equal importance of all preferred churches being composed of such individual converts only. The Christian Communion of the whole can only be genuine as genuine personal piety prevails in every member.

Thus much for the christianity of it; but the term Communion is one of which we should have definite and scriptural ideas. It signifies, for all practical purposes, the same as "fellowship;" and intends a joint or common union, either in action, or in feelings and motives, which lead to action. — Thus we read, 1 Cor. x, 16, of "the Communion of the body and blood of Christ," meaning an union in the common act of partaking the Lord's

Supper, and in the passage already alluded to(1 John, i, 3,) of "our fellowship," (the same term which in the Corinthians is rendered communion) with our Heavenly Father, and with Christ, where also the writer states that he was anxious for his brethren to have a similar fellowship with him and his brother Apostles. Here it clearly intends a common union in feelings and motives. The two passages (from 1 Cor. and 1 John) contain, in substance, the whole doctrine of Christian Communion.

That with the Father and his Son is first in the order of importance, and the order of time, or personal engagements. It is confined to no forms, places, or seasons of divine worship, and to no particular species of worship; while it is "the glory in the midst" of the Church of social worshippers (and "a wall of fire round about them,") it is even more the great attraction and *characteristic* reward of closet religion, or all the Christian's personal approaches to God. It asks for no witness, "but the blessed spirit within" the believer; it tarries for no created soul or symbol in affording him comfort; it begins with the very beginning of true piety—grows with its growth; is more continuous and uninterrupted than any other communion he can enjoy on earth; follows him to the gates of Heaven and opens them for him as he approaches. Paul felt its power and profit alike, only in different degrees, at the gate of Damascus, when he besought the Lord thrice for his thorn in the flesh to be removed, and when he was caught up to the third Heaven. It was anticipated, and in a happy measure enjoyed, by Abraham, when God "called him alone" from Chaldea; by Moses, at the burning bush; by David, in many a solitary cave (inspiring some of his sweetest psalms;) by the three children in the fiery furnace; and by Daniel in the lion's den. Old testament saints had not the blessings of this communion with the Father and the Son, either so distinctly or so richly as they may now be obtained; but whether ten men in a generation *do* now obtain them to the degree these worthies did, may be doubtful. Without doubt, when the Lord looked on Peter from the High Priest's bar, and he went out, he had no other communion with heaven or earth in his *penitence;* when Stephen looked up steadfastly into heaven, while they were dashing out his brains, he enjoyed and wanted no other as the reward of his *faith;* when Paul and Silas sang together in the prison at Philippi, it was this, more than aught beside, that was the source of their *peace and joy;* and when the Revelator was in Patmos, *this* it was which bore him on eagle's wings, where no one since, perhaps, has had grace enough to follow him. Such are a few bible pictures of the blessedness of this communion. Oh! for more honest desires after it, more Jacob wrestlings for it, on each of our parts individually! Effectual fervent prayer is the peculiar means of grace belonging to it—the Jacob's ladder of this heavenly intercourse with earth in all ages.

II. Our communion *with our fellow-christians at large* is another delightful view of this subject. Whenever we meditate upon it, we should begin with the prayer "Lord, increase our faith!" For it has to deal with a vast extent of christian privileges and christian duty. In a dark or cold state of heart we shall understand very little of it.

Two distinct but inseparable branches of this communion are brought forward very prominently in the New Testament:

The saints *on earth*, and all *the dead*,
But one communion make;
All join in Christ, their living head,
And of His grace partake.

Here we "sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God;" here stand around us the goodly fellowship of the Apostles, and the glorious army of the martyrs; here encircles us the "great cloud" of all the faithful "witnesses" to the truth in the past; the whole blessed company having, with their infinitely varied themes of praise, but one anxious "cry" or prayer as to the future—(in which we have many more interests *at stake* than they.) How long, O "Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge us?" They stoop from their repose to cheer us forward and onward; to offer us "the communion of their love, their sympathy, and their example." Death does not sever or weaken the links of this golden chain. Rather may it be said to rivet and strengthen them, as each successive believer disappears from this lower world, and is drawn upward. Out of it, assuredly, *he* never dies; and it is our greatest consolation respecting all that depart hence in the Lord.

May we not here touch, with caution, on *a* Christian Communion which must exist between the church, quick and dead, and those angelic spirits who "are sent forth to minister" unto her? They have much of Christ, our master's, honor at heart; "they do always behold the face of our father in heaven," and thence imbibe all the interest which their noble and spotless natures can, in "the little ones" of the Church. It is given as a reason for us to beware of offending "one of these." Is it not in some communion of spirit, between these guardians, the *wards*, and all their friends, in which we ever benefit or rightly please those little ones?

But there is a communion with our fellow-christians at large *on earth* which involves a greater union of privilege *and duty*. Let us contemplate it closely. It embraces all them who love our Lord Jesus in this lower world. The Saviour in His resurrection manifestations went to the weakest and most sorrowful (always the most faithful of *His* friends) *first*. Let us be followers of Him in this spirit.

This is a communion, then, between all the weakest, most solitary and most despised individual believers on earth, and every other believer, with "all that in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord," "for every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of Him." It is a communion with believers before they are baptized, and the foundation of all which we have more fully with them afterwards. Baptism, essential as we shall see, to Church Communion, is *not*, then, essential to this. It is far more proper and scriptural to call this essential to baptism. The thief on the cross died in this communion of saints; Cornelius and his household enjoyed it, as their abundant spiritual gifts testify, before baptism; while Simon Magus, a baptized man, had "neither part nor lot in the matter."

Therefore, while we should endeavor, in a proper spirit, to press upon all believers to be baptized, as Annanias found it necessary even with Paul, (Acts xxii, 16,) if they are but believers they are our brethren; or 1 John v. 1, (*whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God*) would be false; and there is a need of closer brotherhood among all those "who hold the head from which" the entire "body of Christ, by joints and bands, hath nourishment ministered." If those whom we judge to be true believers will not, from whatever cause, unite with us in christian ordinances, we ought to cultivate a feeling of union with them, and love all that is like Christ in them. So far as we "have attained" to one belief, or one view of things, we ought "to walk by the same rule, and mind the same things."

Satan gloats and glories over all the divisions of real christians, and baits his traps and nets for heedless souls, with our strifes; not troubling them upon the point of what they are, or what they are worth.

On points which God hath left at large
How fiercely will men meet and charge,
No combatants are stiffer.

These divisions make and keep more people infidels and Roman Catholics than anything besides; infidels, who have no creed, and Catholics, who are choked with creeds, being made friends, like Herod and Pontius Pilate, when they can make the most of all the difficulties of Christ's cause.

A bad spirit in regard to such divisions has certainly abated among Evangelical Christians of late years. So that it may truly be contended *we* are *not* so divided, in anything important, as are many equal numbers of political, professional, and mercantile men, in regard to their pursuits. Baptists, and our brethren, the Presbyterians and Methodists, exhibit something much more in principle alike, even with regard to church government, than do the wisest politicians, at this time, in respect to the government of the country; and we are all more agreed about what sin is, than are the physicians about what cholera is. We would not be misunderstood here. More love of peace, and more love of truth, too, are everywhere wanted. Some people seem as if they would wish to see the Lord's vineyard a field of endless strife; and the coat of Christ forever rent, even amonghis friends. Others, and good people, too, are weak enough to consider the divided state of those who profess the truth, a blessing; something in itself desirable. It never can be so; and only those can think it so, who are "of little faith;" in both the full and close union which there has been, and which there shall yet be among all true Christians. Once were they all one, and were found acting together as one, throughout the world; one in sentiment, and one in profession, to a degree which, at our distance in time and feeling from such union, we find it difficult to believe. There was but one Lord owned among them, one faith in the Lord, one baptism into the faith. And if we can think our Saviour knew what was in this respect desirable, and the reason for its being so, His own words will set the matter of the future union of His people at rest with us. *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee; that the world may believe thou hast sent me.* The harvest of the world, then, will *not* be reaped while Evangelical Christians (wherever the fault is) are so much divided as now they are. It is worthy our deep and frequent recollection. Not, however, is this stated here (nor to be at any time referred to) to produce indifference to any duty or to any part of divine truth; but to remind us that we should always speak the truth in love; and know *how* so to defend it, that men of no religion shall not be strengthened in their infidelity by our unhappy way of enforcing what we believe. It often arises from the inferior motives of pride and envy; because troubled streams bring up straws, and men of straw; men who love to be at the head of little parties. Men of small minds, but who still know very well that if Christians were more agreed, their particular influence would be abolished; that, perhaps, they would be "snuffed out" as small lights no longer wanted, and *their* party be first dissolved!

We could, and should, therefore, promote greater union among Evangelical Christians in three ways: 1. By endeavoring everywhere to excite and maintain a higher regard for the great points on which we are all, at present, agreed. A few may be mentioned. The entire personal depravity of man; the essential divinity and indispensable mediation of Christ; jus-

tification by faith in His sufferings and death, alone; the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit; and of the fruits of the spirit, in good works to prove that we have the spirit; together with their awful sanctions of eternal life and death. 2. By meditating frequently and devoutly on the vast number of souls *daily lost* through not receiving, many through sheer ignorance of, these saving truths. 3. By more prayer, hearty prayer, and occasional worship (at opportunies providentially presented) with such as love our Lord, but follow not with us in all things. There have been seasons of revival in which Evangelical Christians have thus acted profitably together. Evangelical Ministers thus very properly and profitably exchange pulpits in our larger towns and cities. Perhaps revivals are still more profitably conducted where there is an entire agreement of sentiment; but there can be no question that God has been with and prospered a combined effort of two or more denominations. He may still be pleased to do so. We should be "ready for every" such "good work;" and then be watchful that the spirit of proselytism to a party (which our Lord has wisely condemned, Mat. xxiii, 15,) do not mar our efforts. or those of others, for the cause of God. All should retain the love of all truth; and yet know how to speak such truths only as are in season; and all such in love.

III. We come to our third view of the subject—*Ecclesiastical or Church Communion.* We invite to the Lord's table, in every regular Church, "brethren and sisters of our own faith and order." It can easily be proved, we think, from scripture, that this is right, and teaches, when properly understood, all that is right in the case. Here we express and enjoy the full communion of saints; all of which we have in this letter already treated: communion with the Lord; communion with those who love Him; and communion in all those great purposes for which He has established a church on earth, viz: For the building up of Saints "on their most holy faith;" for maintaining undivided allegiance and obedience to Himself in doctrines and ordinances, and for gathering those sheep of His, not yet brought into the fold.

Perhaps we may, with propriety, glance here, for a moment, at the Communion of Churches and Associations. The last is our most extended exercise of full Christian Communion; unless we take into view the Conventions of each State, which may be called a Communion of Associations.—Brothren of our faith and order alone, can be delegated to any of these bodies: they represent the various Churches and Associations for particular purposes; the *principal* business transacted being of a Missionary character, domestic or foreign: and *two* undisputed good results having accrued. The spiritual state of the Churches has been fully made known; (their increase rejoicing all the friends of Zion within the circle embraced, while their sorrows meet with sympathy and aid;) but what is more—many a dark corner of the country has been explored by the faithful Missionary of feeble Associations, and new Churches organized where the name of a Church was before scarcely known. Churches will do well, as we believe, to cultivate an increased freedom and fulness and faithfulness of intercourse with each other at these Associations. It is to be observed, however, that both of these larger bodies, Associations and Conventions, are of modern institution; they cannot be traced, in their present form, to the New Testament. Though they may usefully advise in Church difficulties, they have no powers of Church government. Our attachment to them, therefore, should be simply that which we owe to the plans of good and

wise men; they are not, in the same sense as all Church organizations of individual believers, part of the revealed will and counsel of God.

To these Church organizations, then, we now direct our regard. Here, in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord, He expects His people to be walking; and before we discuss the pleas that have been made for introducing here some Christians who cannot walk with us in all Christ's ordinances, it would be well to consider the state of those who can and do. Do not they need the word of admonition to strengthen and tighten the cords of Christian brotherhood among themselves? Is there not much wandering from Church to Church, in search of that spiritual food which each Church should try to provide, and is, to the full extent of its power, bound to provide for the sustenance of its own members within itself? Does not much laxity of discipline appear occasionally? And too much satisfaction at the mere increase of members, without a due watchfulness for the increase of spirituality? Much of lengthening the cords without strengthening the stakes of Israel's tents? Observers who have looked into those small Churches of some years since, that are now become large Churches, (and the lessen may be useful to all that are becoming large.) find that often as numbers increase, brotherly love seems to diminish. So that the period of warm attachment and close union appears to be that of the youth and small numbers of such Churches. *Why* this is, it might be well to inquire. At the beginning it was not so, says the good book.—The largest Churches of the New Testament were some of the warmest and noblest for Christian affection and Christian exertion. Let the example of those at Jerusalem, (the mother of us all,) and at Antioch, (her eldest born Gentile daughter,) be well studied and imitated! What unparallelled love and unity and personal sacrifices in the one! What a visible abundance of the Grace of God; what bold exertions to send forth the Gospel; what great joy and great gifts in the other! We can only here refer to these pattern Churches, and pray that the constituency of all our Associations may strive earnestly after copying such models.

And now would we briefly discuss those pleas for a more open Communion in our Churches, to which we have alluded; or for the admission of some who profess an unity of faith with us, but not of order, at the Lord's table.

Those who have most ably advocated such a Communion, admit that it is a novelty for which they contend; or that while it might, as they suppose, promote the faith, it would not be according to the order of the New Testament thus to act. Their language here is very plain, and should be well weighed. "The members of the primitive Church, consisted only of such as were baptised." He "who had refused to be baptised would, at that period, have been justly debarred from receiving the Sacramental elements;" "would have been deemed unworthy of Christian Communion;" "have been undoubtedly repelled as a contumacious schismatic." So says the celebrated Mr. Hall. "I freely admit that it is clear, after the institution of baptism by our Lord, no person who refused to be baptised, was ever admitted in any Christian Church to that [the Lord's] Supper," writes Mr. Noel. These two gentlemen being the ablest advocates this innovation has found among Baptists—men of whom it may be said, that if ability and character of the highest description, could succeed in establishing error for truth, these were men that had not failed to do it.

Pedobaptists of the greatest learning and ability, make the same conces-

sions. Dr. Wall, the most distinguished Episcopal advocate of infant Baptism, "No Church ever gave the Communion to persons before they were baptised." Dr. Doddridge—"It is certain, so far as our knowledge of primitive antiquity extends, no unbaptised person received the Lord's Supper." Dr. Griffin—"I agree with the advocates of close Communion, that we ought not to commune with those who are not baptised." Other quotations equally strong, might be made from able writers.

At this point, then, we conceive this whole matter might be disposed of. If the Apostles thus acted, we are safe and are justified in following them: if they "rejoiced" in beholding the "order," as well as the faith, of the primitive Churches, and write fully as much, perhaps, about the one as the other; if, in particular, they "praise" such Churches as "*kept the ordinances as they were delivered to*" them, what should be our highest ambition, as to order and ordinances, but to say with their true and immediate Successor—"So did the Apostles, and so do we."

For this we are reproached as "Strict Communionists;" upon which two remarks may be made: 1. If Communion is regarded as an act of obedience to Christ, which undoubtedly (while it is also a high privilege) it should be—the obligation to it arising from His express command, "Do this"—strictness is no just reproach, if too common an one, in regard to obedience. The "good and faithful servant," or child, must be a strictly obedient one. 2. In the case before us, we are not stricter in our view of what is obedience, than the larger portion of those who thus reproach our views, nor so strict as many of them. That is, no regular Christian Church, Protestant, Greek or Roman Catholic, which teaches and practices in any way the *two* ordinances, ever receives persons to the Lord's Supper, who have not been baptised. A case is related by our brother Taylor of Richmond.—The Episcopal minister of a Church in Philadelphia, about to distribute the elements in the Communion service, observed at "the altar," (so called,) a pious friend whom he knew to have been, all his life, a Quaker. Happy in many respects, to see him there, he inquired, in a low voice, if he had been already baptised. The Quaker answering, 'No'—"Then I cannot administer to you *this* ordinance," said the clergyman; and who can deny that he acted consistently, or that thus would have acted any regular Presbyterian, Congregationalist or Methodist, as well as Baptist minister? But our practice is, in some respects, not so strict as that of the body of our Evangelical Pedobaptist brethren. They require evidence, after baptism, of a faith that has changed the heart; the *Christian Minister*, by a happy inconsistency, prevails over the Pedobaptist, and cannot admit to the Lord's Supper, numbers, the far greater portion, of those whom he has baptised.—(This appears, however, a piece of unaccountable injustice to his baptised friends.) The reproach,* then, of being strict Communionists, which we, upon the whole, regard as a "happy" one (1 Pet iv. 14,) for us, is only a strangely ignorant, and often, a mere vulgar and unthought of, one; but it does not at all touch the merits of this question.

Our remaining observations shall be directed to these merits; or to, 1st. Why we cannot admit the unbaptised to the Table of the Lord. 2d. Why we cannot admit the unbaptised (as we still regard them) to the Table of

* It is precisely of the character of the word *Christian*, as used, Acts xi. 26, upon which no one can now decide whether it were first given reproachfully, or whether it was assumed by the disciples as an honor. It implied, in either case, the most honorable of facts, the "close" union of his disciples with Christ.

the Lord, *though they consider themselves baptised.* 3d. Popular objections against our course 4th. What is and must be the tendency of an opposite practice in the case.

I. *We cannot admit the unbaptised, as we regard them, to the Lord's Table*, because the fair construction of our Lord's commission, and the practice of the Apostles, alike forbid it.

(i.) Christ requires the unbaptised, though a believer, and because he is a believer, first of "all things," to be baptised. The command to "teach and baptise" in His commission, involves, of course, the corresponding duties among our people of learning and being baptised. It prescribes also the order in which these duties are to be performed. Ministers are to teach so as to make disciples. (See margin.) 2. Baptise. 3. *Then* to teach *all* other things commanded by Christ. Richard Baxter's language respecting the remarkably specific *orders* of the duties enjoined, was quoted in our Letter on Baptism, to which subject it applies as well as to this. We need only to add here the following: "If any should be so imprudent as to say, it is not the meaning of Christ, that baptism should immediately, without delay, follow-discipleship, they are confuted by the constant example of scripture. So that I dare say," he continues, "this will be without doubt with all consistent, rational, and impartial Christians." Robert Hall, the great modern advocate of Mixed Communion before mentioned, says that, "baptism possesses *a prior* claim to the attention of the Christian convert," and that "to receive the Lord's Supper before Baptism is to *invert* the *natural order* of the Christian Sacraments." Now we know of no authority that has ever appeared in the Church, since our Saviour to "invert," (we should say *pervert*) the natural order of His Sacraments: at least, none such will we obey.

(ii) The undisputed examples or conduct of the Apostles and Primitive Churches, as Baxter says, point in this same direction. Wherever the Christian ordinances are spoken of together, and men's first belief of the whole—they "believed, were baptised, and continued in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship." Such is the account of the Pentecostal season; of the gathering of the Samaritan Church; of the baptism of Paul; and of his labors at Corinth and at Thessalonica. The only point in question seems to be *whether the New Testament doctrine and examples are sufficient and binding authority in the case!* So say strict Baptists, and therefore so must they act. The examples of the Apostles and first Churches are at once a vital branch of all that *is* authority here, and the best possible *comment* on what they understood our Savior's commission to mean.

II. *We cannot admit the unbaptised (as we still regard them,) to the Table of the Lord, though they consider themselves baptised*, because other men's consciences are to regulate their views and practice of duty, and our consciences are to regulate our views and practice. We believe one thing about *what is* baptism, which all antiquity agrees with us should come first, and they another; and are taught to regard Infant Baptism, where even, (as in the Greek Church,) immersion is used, as a nullity—wanting entirely in "the inward and spiritual grace," *that* which, above all things, makes baptism valid. Such a baptism, is then, in our eyes, *no* valid baptism, *not* the New Testament ordinance at all. Nor can subsequent belief, as we see, put life into this dead form. Baptism was instituted to express a personal repentance and faith. It is the symbol of faith and repentance. It never did express such repentance and faith in the case supposed—was no

such symbol. Baptism further symbolises, at the time of receiving it, union by faith with Christ; and specifically, in his death and resurrection. It can in no way express such union in an infant's case, who can have no thought about these matters. It is essentially, also, an expression of personal intentions and purposes, or holy views. *Intention* may enter so materially into various private and public transactions that the want of it vitiates them altogether. A man cannot make a will without intending to make a will. He cannot contract marriage without meaning to contract marriage. Nor can he, as we read the New Testament, be the subject of a valid Christian Baptism without intending a valid Christian Baptism: cannot contract the regular *vows* of baptism, without "*before* those *vows* making enquiry," and meaning to keep them. There is a vitiating want of purpose and intention, in the whole transaction of infant baptism. The child makes no vows, for it has no purposes. *He* is at the time bound to nothing. The whole service of God freely chosen, is what baptism binds us to; a thing impossible in the infant's case.

Although, then, the conscientious believer in his own infant baptism as valid, is not to be classed with the denier of all baptism, we see not how his belief can alter the facts in this case, or entitle him to privileges grounded on valid baptism. His having been submitted, while altogether unconscious of the transaction, to an unauthorized rite, can avail him nothing in claiming authorized privileges. On his own testimony, however, to a *subsequent* conversion, this rite has been demonstrated, in his case, to have been entirely unavailing. All the vows made for him have been broken; every pledge of his consecration to God violated. Since this alleged baptism or professed death unto sin, he has been entirely alive to it, he has contracted the whole of his personal guilt; gone greedily into sin; and become so much its subject and servant as to be "free" altogether, as the Apostle writes, "from righteousness;" on system opposed to all its claims. It seems preposterous to us to admit saving power or any spiritual virtue in that which has been followed, uniformly, by such carnal and condemnatory issues. If it was not a nullity at the time, its uses, if we believe in total depravity afterwards, have all been totally annihilated. We may here touch the case of those who have been admitted to the church by sprinkling or pouring, or a confession of their faith. It is well known that Baptists consider immersion as essential to baptism. These parties are in the position of those who have meant to execute a legal deed, but have executed it illegally. Perhaps the right number of witnesses to the signature of a will may illustrate the case. If this is wanting, and the testator alive, the will must be executed again to convey the property. In its present state it would convey none. The informality is fatal; the whole instrument, in its present state, a nullity. A command to baptise, is a command to immerse, as we hold, and of course for the candidate to be immersed. He who has not been immersed, has not obeyed this command. The informality has been fatal—the so-named baptism a nullity. A want of form is held rationally to destroy all the force of a form on many important occasions.

As, therefore, not his own conviction only of being a true believer, but evidence to *our* conviction is required, before we can satisfactorily baptise the candidate; so that which is deemed by us a valid baptism, we feel bound to require before the candidate for communion can be admitted to the Lord's table. Our firm conviction is that no servant of the Lord or his church, however pious and learned, has any legislative authority in the

matter; of course none to dispense with the laws of Christ in regard to it. All are "under the law to Christ."

III. *Popular objections to our course*, are: 1. It is *bigotted* and *sectarian.* This is doubtless an availing cry, but is it a fair one in the case? Bigotry, regarded mildly, is excessive attachment to the minor parts of a creed.—But the charge takes for granted what we entirely deny. In our view, a great and important institution of Jesus Christ is concerned—the initiatory ordinance of His Church; one *without* which no party of Christians, except a small number in modern times (the Quakers and Open Communion Baptists) have ever attempted to organize a church. For the same reason, our conduct cannot be sectarian. The point at issue regards not the mere upholding of the peculiarities of a division of the Church; our principle, that of not receiving the unbaptized into the Church, involves the most *elemental* views of the Christian community. It has never before been alleged that baptism can be overlooked in the *gathering* of a Church. That cannot be sectarian, in an obnoxious sense, which has been the common sentiment of the orthodox throughout Christendom in all ages.

2. *But you exclude Christians, of acknowledged eminence in piety, from the Lord's table.* Have eminently pious men, then, no unreasonable or unscriptural prejudices? Or are we not mildly to withstand "PETER" when he is "to be blamed?" What leading Christian practice has not been opposed or declined by men of otherwise pious character? The observance of the Sabbath, public prayer, preaching, the circulation and study of the scriptures, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, as a whole and in part? The whole Romish Church are contending for the entire omission of the wine in the case of the laity. And must we not admit that eminently pious persons have been found in that Church, both before and since the Reformation? Wycliff, Tyndale, Sir Thomas More, Fenelon, Pascal, Francis Xavier, might here be shewn to have high claims to that character. But our space and time forbid. We would by no means exclude, by any sentence of ours, *all* the Popes themselves from the kingdom of God. But what of this? Would Paul have permitted the half-communion of the Papal Church to be recognised as the Lord's Supper? Or would *he* have communed therein with the Pope, or Wycliff, or Tyndale, or Fenelon? All sound Protestants will say no. That Church had changed the ordinance from what the Apostle had left it, and he would have left them as we have done. Neither, as we believe, would he have recognised the half baptism (so to speak) of the Pedobaptists, or have given it the kind of standing which a mixed communion would in the Christian Church.

3. *But you acknowledge the brotherhood of Pædobaptists, and avail yourselves sometimes of their ministry, yet refuse the whole the Lord's Supper.* We regard Evangelical Pedobaptists as our brethren in Christ; but brethren, in respect to ordinances, walking disorderly, and therefore we obey an Apostolic admonition in withdrawing from them in their administration of ordinances. Of the ministry of our Pedobaptist brethren we sometimes avail ourselves, because we find them preaching Christ. In the irregular preaching of Christ we find an Apostle rejoicing, Phil. i, 18. Preaching, moreover, is not necessarily connected with Church organization; it may be conducted in or out of the pale of the Church. Apollos is an eloquent man, mighty in the scriptures, and taught diligently the things of the Lord, when he only knew the way of the Lord imperfectly as to baptism, as do our Pœdobaptist friends, we think. See Acts xviii, 25. In hearing

preaching we feel, again, that we can separate the human testimony from the word of God—we may receive or reject. But to recognize a known unscriptural ordinance, like infant baptism, or omit a known scriptural one, (in our view) like believer's baptism, is obviously different. We accept thankfully the teachings of any man who can instruct us, as can many of the Pedobaptists, in the things concerning God's kingdom; and will not deprive ourselves of the great satisfaction and advantages we derive from acting with them so far as we are agreed. But we feel constrained, when they become irregular as to ordinances—unscriptural, as we believe—in their administrations of both baptism and the Lord's Supper, to halt; and, as Paul and Barnabas, on a less occasion, to part; because, greatly as we love our Pedobaptist friends, Christ, and His cause, we love better.

4. *Tendencies of the New System.* Each of the ordinances is a positive institution, wholly originating in and dependent on the will of the legislator. Destroy one (as we shall shew this system strongly tends to) and in the vital force of its obligation you assail the other. We receive the sacred elements of the Lord's Supper in both kinds, and we administer one before the other uniformly, because thus the Apostles received the ordinance "of the Lord." The Papists have much to say about a whole Christ being received in the bread, and we could prove no material error to be taught in administering the wine before the bread; but should we not shrink from the pert Protestant who would introduce the latter practice, as we reject all the Papistical reasonings about the former? That is right to be done here, and only that which the Lord has commanded.

The new system throws all things out of place in the relation of the Christian ordinances to each other. It would displace them, avowedly, from their relative position. But shall we thus improve them? Shall we not corrupt each in turn, and give an anti-Christian prominence to one or other? Already when this point of a mixed communion is urged, the Lord's Supper is dwelt upon and magnified out of all due proportion. It is at least made a frequent substitute for all other tokens of Christian charity. You cannot love the Pedobaptist brethren, it will be rashly charged, because you cannot meet them at the Lord's table. To this it would seem to be more than a sufficient reply. "They cannot love me as a brother, or they would meet me at the sacramental water; but I find other tokens of love to them prescribed, consistent with my obedience to Christ, and in them I will seek to excel."

It is to magnify the Lord's Supper out of due proportion, when we insist that this blessed feast is exclusively the memorial of Christ's death.—Baptism is such equally. And when we speak of partaking the Lord's Supper as the chief token of Christian love and unity. 1. It is a token of love and unity among Christians, but this is not its *primary* or chief intent; but to symbolize our union with Christ. Ye are all one bread and one body, *forasmuch as ye all are partakers of that one bread* (Christ.) *Do this in remembrance of me.* Overlooking this essential order of the affections symbolized, serious mistakes may be made. 2. Nor was "the Apostles' fellowship, *chiefly* in the Lord's Supper, but in prayer and praise, the hospitable entertainment of the Church, and the fraternal relief of the wants of all. Fraternal devotion and fraternal charities, of every kind, were at least as conspicuous in the best days of the Church; and in these are *we one* with all who love our Lord.

But the tendency of administering the Lord's Supper to the baptized and unbaptized indifferently, is to the extinction of believers' baptism, and indeed, of all baptism. This may readily be made apparent. Establish a right of the unbaptized to the Lord's table, and you establish their right to every privilege of God's house. What can you consistently withhold? And ponder the *terms* on which you do this. These two are the only positive institutions or ordinances of the Church; in natural order, as all hold, baptism is first. *It must come in there, or you can require it no where.*— But this ordinance you now agree to pass unnoticed, and institute an acknowledged Christian Church or organized society, *without* baptism. For peace sake there must be, in such a society, a dead acquiescence in utter silence, or endless disputations on this subject. Half or three fourths of the Church may, consistently with this system, be proven Pedobaptists. On its introduction, the barrier of baptism must be broken down. It is not a legitimate fence of Christ's fold, but a wall of Jewish exclusiveness; as a *law* of God's house, it may be, by individuals, for a while acknowledged; but happily disobedience has no penalty! Was such a law ever long respected?

In fine, here is a Christian community holding as a whole, and *as such*, with no baptism, and yet in its component parts, with every variety of baptism, or just with baptism enough to destroy the whole doctrine of baptism. The Pedobaptists cannot, in charity, enforce their views, nor the Baptists theirs. The Church, endeavoring to include both parties, has silenced both; each, in the act of their charitable embrace, while disarming an opponent, has stultified itself; and all God's counsel on the subject of baptism is sealed up, on the peril of every old charge of sectarianism and bigotry being renewed. Beguiled by the shadow of an unity of profession, this community, surely, like the animal in the fable, has dropped the children's meat, in this ordinance, forever. While such a compromise should last, it would be a Church acknowledging no baptism, neither that of infants nor believers. In many cases believers' baptism would be discontinued, accession to the Church not requiring it. It would go first. But who that loves consistency can, in *either* view of the ordinance, desire to live under such a system? Or who *would*, by means of such a system, seek such a result as this? Not a single good man, as we believe, with his eyes open.

No.	CHURCHES.	POST OFFICES.	CLERKS OF CHURCHES.	BY WHOM SUPPLIED.	L. D.	DELEGATES NAMES.	Bap'd.	R. L.	Res'r.	Dis'd.	Excl'd.	Dead.	Tot. Num.	Contr.
1	Buffalo,	Erwinsville, N. C.	Wm. Hamrick,	T. Dickson,	4	*B. E. Rollins*, J. Turner, E. Willson, Wm. Hamrick,	5	1	0	2	1	0	169	$2 00
2	Sandy Run,	Moorsborough, N. C.	E. P. Jones,	J. S. Ezell,	3	C. Bridges, R. McBray, W. B. Lovelace, E. P. Jones,	0	0	2	5	13	2	151	2 00
3	Friendship,	Smith's Store, S. C.	R. B. Smith,	S. Drumman,	1	W. LANKFORD, J. Ham,	17	3	1	4	2	3	141	1 90
4	Cedar Springs,	Cedar Springs, S. C.	J. W. Cooper,	M. C. Barnett,	4	M. C. BARNETT, E. Barnett,	0	15	0	4	0	1	85	1 00
5	Buck Creek,	Damascus, S. C.	F. Cantrell,	D. Scruggs,	3	B. Bonner, J. Turner, J. S. Ezell,	14	1	1	1	5	5	141	1 50
6	Long Creek,	Dallas, N. C.	W. B. Lay,	S. Suttle,	3	S. Weathers, W. B. Lay,	24	1	0	2	0	3	99	1 00
7	Providence,	Limestone Springs, S. C.	J. Byres,	D. Scruggs,	1	S. MORGAN, G. Pitty, J. Byres,	16	1	2	3	3	2	123	1 50
8	Elbethel,	Gowdysville, S. C.	A. S. Goudelock,	F. W. Littlejohn,	1	A. S. Goudelock,	0	1	0	2	1	0	51	1 40
9	Goucher Creek,	Hurricane, S. C.	J. W. Lipscomb,	F. W. Littlejohn,	3	W. Austill, R. Littlejohn,	16	4	0	7	3	1	136	1 22
10	Antioch,	Antioch, S. C.	G. R. Whisnant,	L. McCurry,	1	H. Borders, W. Logan, G. R. Whisnant,	4	0	0	1	4	0	146	2 00
11	Zion,	Shelby, N. C.	John Bailey,	T. Dickson,	1	T. DICKSON, J. SUTTLE, J. Bailey,	1	0	3	0	1	2	118	1 50
12	Wolf's Creek,	Earlsville, S. C.	S. M. West,	W. Hannon,	3	*A. Dill*, C. Bullington,	0	0	1	1	0	0	72	1 00
13	Macedonia,	Hurricane, S. C.	Wm. Guthrie,	F. W. Littlejohn,	4	J. S. EZELL, T. Pope,	5	1	0	0	0	0	61	80
14	Philadelphia,	Glenn's Springs, S. C.	E. Smith,	M. C. Barnett,	2	L. Lanford, J. C. White,	0	4	0	2	1	0	65	75
15	Bethesda,	Bivingsville, S. C.	E. P. Brown,	J. S. Ezell,	1	E. P. Brown, J. Usry, J. Lee,	13	1	0	6	2	1	129	1 15
16	Camp's Creek,	Sandy Run, N. C.	E. Byres,	J. S. Ezell,	2	A. Bonner, J. M. McCraw,	2	1	0	1	3	3	99	1 00
17	State Line,	Cowpens, S. C.	W. B. Turner,	D. Scruggs,	3	D. SCRUGGS, P. Watkins,	3	1	0	0	0	1	54	1 25
18	Mt. Ararat,	Draytonsville, S. C.	A. J. Pealer,	J. S. Ezell,	4	E. L. Steadman, A. J. Pealer,	3	2	3	1	0	0	34	60
19	Hebron,	Mountain Island, N. C.				No Return.								
20	Zoar,	Shelby, N. C.	J. R. Logan,	T. Dickson,	2	Barnett Putman, J. R. Logan,	26	4	2	0	0	1	90	1 00
21	Zion Hill,	Hurricane, S. C.	John Turner,	W. Curtis,	2	J. D. Cannon, J. Epton,	1	0	0	0	0	0	13	50
22	Corinth,	Limestone Springs, S. C.	A. McPherson,	T. Curtis,	2	T. K. PURSLEY, T. J. CAMPBELL,	0	1	0	1	2	0	33	50
23	Capernaum,	Shelby, N. C.	L. Gordan,	W. Hill,	2	W. HILL,	3	3	2	2	0	1	78	1 55
24	Bethlehem,	White Plains, N. C.	B. Gofourth,	B. E. Rollins,	3	B. Gofourth, N. Earl,	3	0	0	0	0	0	43	75
25	Sulphur Springs,	Glenn's Springs, S. C.	P. West,	W. Lankford,	4	P. West, J. W. Montgomery,	10	3	0	0	0	1	30	75
26	Unity,	Smith's Ford, S. C.	A. G. Smith,	J. Newland,	1	J. Davis,	0	0	1	0	0	0	29	50
27	Upper Fair Forest,	Unionville, S. C.	W. T. Crenshaw,	J. T. Geter,	1	J. Fincher, L. Swink,	7	2	3	1	0	0	51	1 00
28	Pacolet,	Pinkneyville, S. C.	T. B. Goins,	J. G. Kindick,	3	J. G. KINDRICK, M. MULINAX, J. G. McKISIC,	0	1	2	0	0	0	128	1 25
29	Double Springs,	Camp Call, N. C.	M. Gold,	J. Suttle,	2	D. P. Gold, M. Gold,	8	0	0	0	5	1	87	1 25
30	Gilead,	Jonesville, S. C.	R. Coleman,	J. G. Kindrick,	2	T. Kirby,	7	4	0	0	1	2	93	1 00
31	Bethel,	Webb's Ford, N. C.	W. H. Harden,	D. Pannell,	2	W. H. Harden, J. Walker,	7	0	0	3	1	1	22	50
32	Shelby,	Shelby, N. C.	Wm. Roberts,	M. C. Barnett,	3	Wm. Roberts,	0	0	0	2	0	2	24	1 00
33	Ephesus,	Limestone Springs, S. C.	H. G. Gaffney,	Wm. Curtis,	4	T. CURTIS, H. G. Gaffney,	4	0	0	1	0	0	10	50
34	Boiling Springs,	Sandy Run, N. C.	W. M. Champion,	W. B. Padget,		J. Moor, J. Jolly, J. M. Hamrick,	1	0	0	0	1	0	114	1 75
35	Mount Sinai,	Erwinsville, N. C.	J. Randall,	L. McSwain,	3	L. MCSWAIN, J. Harrell,	0	0	0	0	0	1	35	75
36	New Bethel,	Gardner's Ford, N. C.	R. T. Hord,	T. Dickson,	4	F. Lattemore, O. P. Gardner,	11	2	2	0	0	0	123	1 50
37	Mount Pleasant,	Sandy Run, N. C.	W. B. Hames,	T. Dickson,	2	*G. Rollins*, W. B. Hames, D. H. Green,	4	1	1	0	0	2	47	1 00
38	Salem,	Lincolnton, N. C.	A. H. Robison,	W. Hill,	3	A. H. Robison, A. T. Cansler,	17	6	7	0	0	0	79	1 50
39	Broad River.	Cherokee Iron Works, S. C.	W. Hamrick.	B. E. Rollins.		D. Pealer, T. Moss.	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	40
							226	61	33	52	49	35	2943	41 53